DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 170 765 CS 204 820

AUTHOR Matthews, Dorothy, Ed.
TITLE Best Illinois Prose and Poetry of 1978.
INSTITUTION Illinois Association of Teachers of English, Urbana.
PUB DATE 79
NOTE 46p.; The Illinois Association of Teachers of English is an affiliate of the National Council of Teachers of English
JOURNAL CIT Illinois English Bulletin; v66 n4 Entire Issue Spr 1979

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Awards; *Composition (Literary); Descriptive Writing; Elementary Secondary Education

ABSTRACT

The eight prose and 20 poetry entries in this bulletin were selected by a panel of the Illinois Association of Teachers of English as representing the best student writing in the state for 1978. The prose selections include descriptive passages and short stories, while the poetry entries represent a variety of forms, among them haiku and free verse. Lists of students chosen for honorable mention in both divisions and an honor roll of teachers are included. (FL)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

ED170765

ILLINOIS ENGLISH BULLETIN

Illinois Association of Teachers of English

LATE SPRING 1979

Best Illinois Prose and Poetry of 1978

Dorothy Matthews
Editor
100 English Building
Urbana, Illinois 61801

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Illinois Assoc. of Teachers of English
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

CS204 820

BEST ILLINOIS PROSE AND POETRY OF 1978

PREFACE TO PROSE SELECTIONS 1
World of Snow by Robert Schwartz 2
The Wreck by Kim Wilson 3
Lock, Stock, and Barrel by Patricia Jones 3
The Marksman by Tom McDougal 7
The Corner Kingdom by Jeanne Omohundro 11
The Pugnacious Pussycat by Laurie White 13
Teaching the Illiterate by Phil McGrath 16
Singing in the Rain by Kathy Murray 20
HONORABLE MENTION FOR PROSE 22

PREFACE TO POETRY SELECTIONS 25
To No One in Particular by Wendy Zuckerman 26
Blind Pigs by Susan Phillips 27
It Was in a Nursing Home by Michele Dougherty 28
Grandpa by Carole Clark 29
French-Fried Sigh by Ruth Levy 30
Nobody Liked Semour Borey by Laura Knapp 31
Once Upon a Time by Betsy Spethmann 32
Summertime Friends by Shaila Zellman 33
(Untitled) by Janice Butler 34
In Memory of William Carlos Williams by Darryl Maleike 35
Metamorphosis by Deborah Gordon 36
Noah's Formal by Robert Leahy 36
(Untitled) by Beth McManus 37
(Untitled) by Tammy Siegall 37
Birds in the Snow by Beth Smith 38
Dark Man by Stephen Glickman 39
A Song for Wild Rice by Erwin Cohen 40
Advice by Margot Fitzgerald 41
Haiku by Michelle Mathews 42
Grandma by Lisa Arnold 42
HONORABLE MENTION FOR POETRY 43

HONOR ROLL OF TEACHERS 44

Published bi-monthly October through May. Subscription price $5.00 per year; single copies $2.00. Entered as second-class matter October 29, 1941, at the post office at Urbana, Illinois, under the act of March 3, 1879.

Address business communications to IATE, 100 English Building, Urbana, Illinois 61801. Address manuscripts and other editorial communications to Dorothy Matthews, Editor, 100 English Building, Urbana, Illinois 61801. Member of NCTE Information Agreement.

ILLINOIS ENGLISH BULLETIN

Official Publication of the Illinois Association of Teachers of English

Vol. 66, No. 4 **Urbana, Illinois** **Late Spring, 1979**

Preface to Prose Selections

The judges of the prose entries found the experience challenging, demanding, and, yes, sometimes even exhilarating. Some of the comments from them are: "I wish my brother who is a ninth grader could write this well." "I can't get over the vocabulary of these high schoolers. It is astonishing." "How do you draw the line when there are so many so well written?" "It is good to know that there are still young writers with standards and style. Can we kidnap them for our freshman comp classes?"

As always, it is difficult for judges to set up exact standards because the object of the contest is to have winners from all grade levels and from all areas of the state. How is it possible to use the same standards for an eighth grader that one uses for a twelfth grader? Obviously, it is not. Therefore, this panel of judges arbitrarily decided to have winners from all grade levels but not to be overly concerned about geographical area.

Since there are so many entries at each grade level that meet the observable criteria of form, development, mechanical correctness, etc., the panel of judges made its final decisions on the basis of something less tangible, like wit, style, evidence of inventiveness, or seeming spontaneity. The point of this is that the teachers and all students who have either the entire work published or whose names appear in the honor roll of Honorable Mention should be equally proud of their accomplishments. This panel of judges is confident that any panel would have chosen the same pieces, but perhaps would have had a slightly different ordering of them.

A special note of thanks should go to all students who submitted prose pieces and especially to their teachers who take the time to teach writing and who have the gift of inspiring young people to write imaginatively, cogently, and persuasively. All teachers who

can pull out the kind of writing that this panel of judges read ought to receive canonization automatically.

English Department
Southern Illinois University
Carbondale

Judging Committee: Roy Weshinskey, Chairperson
Ted E. Boyle
Jane Forte
Lewis Jay Hilliard
Paul Kolojeski
Janet Rivers
Herbert Russell

Best Illinois Prose

World of Snow

A peaceful blanket of white covers the earth as I awake to the rising sun. The beaming light glistens on the icy cotton blanket. More cottonballs sail to the ground until the world of snow is silent. Under the untouched cover, small animals peacefully rest. The blanket grows higher and higher while the animals relax. Before long the heat from the great ball of fire warms and melts the resting world to the barren ground.

ROBERT SCHWARTZ, *seventh*
Northwood Junior High School, Highland Park
Joyce Hazelkorn, teacher

The Wreck

Deep beneath the cool, blue-green depths of the moving ocean lies the wreck of a great sailing vessel. Her bow is smashed, covered with barnacles; her mast is crumpled as if it were a carpenter's ruler folded wrongly. The great sails sway with the currents, their tattered fingers reaching out to touch . . . something, but only the ship knows what. The once-peopled cabins now are empty; their small glass portholes look out only on fish, seawater, and coral. The once jagged-edged holes in her sides (torn by ruthless, cutting, searching reefs) are now smooth and slimy with algae. A strangely-twisted, solitary bone figure leans for support against the bent mast, giving testimony to the bloodchilling fact — the captain went down with his ship.

KIM WILSON, *ninth*
The Willows Academy, Glencoe
Susan Street, teacher

Lock, Stock, and Barrel

I had always tried to be an obedient and respectful daughter. I had tried to listen patiently to Mama when she carried on about women's work and how a good wife must sew, cook, clean, furnish a home, and rear children, but it all seemed so useless. I took it for granted that when I married, and I knew that someday far removed from my present sixteen year old days I would marry, just as my sisters before me, I would lead the same life my mother did, complete with a lady's maid, a cook, someone to help with the housekeeping, a nanny, and handfuls of other darkies to tend the fields.

I tried to listen to Papa, too, Mr. Roger Quarles, as he lectured on obedience in his household and especially in his youngest daughter. But when he told me I was to marry Mr. Smith Pruitt, I burst into tears of anger and helplessness. I should have seen it coming, for Mr. Pruitt had been a frequent guest this past year, sharing the sabbath meal when all the family would unite to pray and dine together. Yet Mr. Pruitt never looked at me as other young men did. In fact, he only addressed me with greetings or to comment on the meal as one might to the daughter of a close friend. And after the meal, Papa, Brother Roger, and he would retire into the study to discuss whatever men discussed in studies after dinner. Besides, Mr. Pruitt was so old, almost twice my age. And I wasn't ready for marriage yet.

For a week I was sullen and cross, rarely speaking except in shrill tones. Then my anger turned to apprehension as Sunday dinner approached. But the flutter of my innards and the stickiness of my palms, as Mattie coiled my hair and tied my sash, were in vain, for apart from the curt nod, Mr. Pruitt didn't notice me at all. As the meal drew to a close I sat expecting at least one warm look, but the men rose with their sherry and cigars and headed for the study without so much as a glance in my direction. Red faced, I sprang from the table, gathered my skirts and ran for the stairs. I could hear Mama and Sister Elizabeth calling, "Mary, Mary child, come back here!"

Once inside my room I lit a candle and splashed water from the porcelain basin on my face. I undressed rapidly, and, as I lay between the quilted covers of my feathered canopy, I could hear Papa's laughter from the study directly below.

"Ah yes, Mrs. Mary Quarles Pruitt, a fine name indeed."

I rolled over, clenching a pillow against my ears and cried myself to sleep.

Much later, when the whole house was asleep, Mama came to me. She had heard my sobs but did not come until Papa had fallen asleep.

I awoke at her hushed, "Mary, Mary child," my eyes still red and swollen. "Mary, you mustn't do this to yourself."

"I can't help it, Mama. I don't want to marry, not now."

"Oh child, you're so young," Mama sighed, "but you have to grow up soon. It will be hard on all of us, seeing our baby go away, but now I have to give you up."

"But, Mama, I hardly know Mr. Pruitt," I sobbed.

"Mr. Pruitt is a fine man, and together you can build a home and start a family, helping to make Tennessee a stronger state."

Her inspired words meant little to me. I didn't want to strengthen Tennessee or start a family. All I wanted to do was stay home in our white, pillared house with its wide veranda and swing in Fall Creek, Wilson County. But as she hugged me, I knew I had no choice.

The date was set for a Sunday, November the twelfth, year of our Lord eighteen hundred twenty-eight. Mr. Pruitt had bought forty-nine acres on the west bank of the west fork of Stones River and had already built a cabin and barn.

"All it needs," laughed Papa, "is a wife and horse to fill them."

I, being the youngest of the family, was showered with the smothering attention of my sisters. They stayed at the house for a week to do my sewing, embroidering, and packing. As I picked

up a plain, brown cotton day dress, and compared it to the blue taffeta-trimmed-with-lace that I was wearing, a fresh wave of self pity swept through me.

"Do you like it, Mary?" asked Sister Louisiana brightly. For an answer I threw the dress at her feet and spun around on the heel of my satin slipper.

The only bright spot in the gloomy week was my wedding dress. Silken and white, it was covered with rows upon rows of lace that tapered gracefully into a train.

At last the day came when I was to wear the gown. The morning was overcast, with no definite dawn. And it remained so all through the morning as I was prepared for the ceremony. Mattie was pinning the last rose in my hair when I heard the rattle of the coach. My stomach lurched and continued to lurch as Mama, Papa, and I rattled our way to the church, a two-roomed, whitewashed structure of wood. The final heave came when I saw, stationed beside the church, a team of two and a covered wagon.

I was told, by Mr. Pruitt himself, directly after the ceremony that we would begin our journey to Stones River that day in order to win some time against the impending storm. I was furious and a retort was forthcoming, but I swallowed it. This man was now my husband, honor, cherish, and obey. . . . I had time only to change in the adjoining room of the church, laying the silken gown aside in place of a grey woolen traveling outfit and bonnet. My eyes blurring with tears, I squared my shoulders and stepped outside. The first person I saw was Mr. Pruitt. He was sitting on the dashboard of the wagon with the reins in his hands. Something seemed different. Then I realized it was the first time I had ever seen Mr. Pruitt wearing other than tails, trousers, and a cravat.

I turned to Mama. She hugged me fiercely and whispered, "We're going to miss you, child. Take care." I wanted to tell her that I would miss her too, and that I loved her and wanted to stay in Fall Creek with her, but all that came out was, "Mama."

Papa kissed me on the cheek then hugged me to him. "Good-bye, Mary." Then turning to Mr. Pruitt, he said, "Take good care of her, Smith."

I embraced each of my sisters in turn, kissed Brother Roger, then all my relatives and neighbors. After one last tearful hug to Mama, Mr. Pruitt lifted me up to the dashboard and lashed the team to action.

We rode for six hours in silence broken at intervals by Mr. Pruitt and his questions. By the time we stopped, my back ached, my hair was a mess, and I was irritable from the long silence. No

sooner had I sat down to lean my aching body against a comforting tree than Smith Pruitt told me he was hungry. I stared stupidly at him until he stretched an iron skillet towards me and hinted with, "Dinner." After two futile attempts to start a fire I sat nursing my back and my pride as Smith Pruitt threw together a cooking fire. I fried slabs of bacon and hash-browns, squatting with my head averted and eyes squinting from the stinging smoke. As we ate, I sat smelling bacon grease and feeling thoroughly disgusted with myself. And I had to make do with a few splashes of cold water to wash my face and neck. I crawled into the back of the wagon, dusty and blushing, and waited for my husband.

During the night it had begun to rain. Awakening, I found myself cold and damp. The inside of the wagon was dark, but not enough to miss the rent through which a stream of water cascaded down to my blankets. With a cry of uncomfortable anger I stood up, only to hit my head on the low ribs of the wagon. Biting back tears, I stepped from the wagon. Smith was trying to shield the dying fire from the rain-laden gusts of wind. As I stood there the flame sputtered and went out.

"It's no use, Mary, there won't be a breakfast this morning."

I stayed in the back of the wagon while Smith drove until I knew I could become no wetter. I crawled through the canvas opening and was met by the sight of what seemed to be an abyss of swirling water, but was actually a creek swollen with rain. And we were in the middle of it.

"I'm glad you're out here, Mary. I need your help. The horses can't go any farther alone. You lead them and I'll push from the rear." I reached for the reins but he shook his head. "No, you have to lead them, you'll have to get down."

"What? Into the water?" I asked stupidly. "With my dress on?"

I found myself in waist high, freezing water, tugging on two stubborn horses.

"It's no use, Mary," I heard Smith shout from the rear of the wagon. "The load is too heavy. Something's got to go." I rushed around to the back, tripping as I went and came up sputtering.

"Not my mother's china," I wailed. "I couldn't stand to give it up!"

"It's either that or the kettle and spoons."

"Well at least let me keep the dining chairs," I pleaded.

"There's no way."

With tears in my eyes I watched my possessions spin crazily out of my reach.

The next day was worse. The heavy rain had made the roads

unbearable, and I spent the better part of the day straining behind the wagon, covered with mud. In the evening there was no dry firewood and as I refused to let Smith chop up another piece of furniture, we had another cold and slightly damp meal, stale biscuits and ham. The following days were similarly uncomfortable, varying only in that sometimes we were fortunate to have a fire and warm meal. At the ferry at Stones River we lost another piece of furniture as the boat pitched and the chair slid over the edge and into the river. I took a deep breath but said nothing. On the last leg of our journey with only three miles to go, the front axle cracked. All that night by lantern's glow, Smith worked while I kept him supplied with bacon and hot coffee.

In the morning, with eyes drooping from the lack of sleep, we saw the first view of our land together. Holding hands, Smith described the land and I listened. To the west Stones River wound lazily in the fall sun and all about us lay gentle hills and valleys, fringed with rich, green forests. The land was beautiful.

"And there is our home," laughed Smith as he pointed to a cabin surrounded by pines. Smith helped me down from the wagon and swung me around. Laughing, I ran to the door and shoved it open. My heart sank, but only for an instant. After all, a home is what you make of it. Who had said that? Mama? No, I had said that. I took a deep breath and squared my shoulders in what was becoming a habitual gesture. Hands on hips, I turned around to face Smith.

"Well, Mrs. Pruitt, what do you think of this?" he asked.

"Hmm. It needs a lot of cleaning, furnishing, and decorating, a woman's touch. But I can do it. After all, this is our home."

"Yes, Mary, we're home."

PATRICIA JONES, *tenth*
Evanston Township High School
George Seidenbecker, teacher

The Marksman

Suddenly a small figure rose up in the field about sixty yards away and shot to the left. Paul Kelly raised the rifle to his shoulder, aimed at the figure (estimating hold-over), and fired, all within a matter of two seconds. The cardboard silhouette fell over and stopped.

"Boy, you were ready two months ago." Liz Kelly rose to her feet from kneeling on the ground and looked at him with wonderment. "Can you do that at seventy meters?"

Paul pretended to be absorbed in the gun. He pulled the bolt open and ejected the shell, then put a live round in. "I think so."

"Hey, Dad," Liz yelled, "set it up again, okay?"

Her father walked the distance to where the fake rabbit lay knocked off its track. He put it back on, facing the other way. Then he went to the end of the track and cocked the spring that pulled on the target. Ducking behind a shield of sheet metal backed by wooden board he yelled out, "Let me know when you are ready."

Liz picked up her rifle and started walking away until she got to the line marked 70 m. Paul tagged behind her. Liz said, "Let me try this. Cover for me."

Paul flicked off his safety and waited. Liz gave the signal to her father and the rabbit started its run again.

Liz aimed and fired, but the target kept on going. Working from lots of practice, Paul squeezed his trigger. The target stopped, despite his nervousness.

His father emerged from behind the shield and started walking toward him. He stopped next to Paul and put his arm on his shoulders. "I'll wake you at four o'clock." Then he turned and went toward the house with Liz.

Paul sat back, relishing his satisfaction. For four years his father had gone hunting with his older sister, who had three years on him, while he stayed home, helping around the house, and occasionally getting to practice on the moving target that his father had helped him build. It had always been Liz who got all the attention, who was always talking with Paul's father about the day's hunting while Paul and his mother remained silent. But now he was accepted, now he would be able to go with them, and just wait, all of that practice would help him get the biggest bag of game of them all.

Absentmindedly fingering the ammunition in his pocket, Paul picked up his gun and headed home.

All too soon his father was shaking Paul's shoulder. "Come on, boy, get up. You want to go hunting?"

Groggy, Paul tried to sit up and just barely made it. The excitement had kept him up late that night, and so he hadn't gotten much more than five hours of sleep. He opened his eyes and could just berely make out the shape of his father leaving the room.

"God, it can't be four o'clock already. Too dark. Jesus." Feeling like a cotton ball from head to foot, he fell out of bed and stood shakily to his feet.

Breakfast helped to wake him, especially some coffee that almost made him cry out from a burnt tongue. But he noted that Liz drank hers without blinking an eye, so after adding a lot of cream he drank his down.

When they went outside the dawn was beginning to peer over the trees to the east, and the dew was just glistening on the ground. They made their way, bolts open but ammunition ready in their pockets, silently through the woods. Paul felt an unreal sense of knowing everything that was going on around him. It was almost an unreal silence that they broke with their footsteps, and Paul wondered how it could be so quiet.

Almost as if to make fun of him, the birds around started into their song as if on a cue, and he almost jumped out of his skin at the sudden noise.

They marched for nearly an hour through the woods and abruptly came upon a wide open field about three kilometers square. The flood of brightness hurt Paul's eyes after the cool shade of the wood.

Liz and her father stopped to load their guns, putting the safeties on. Paul followed suit.

His father said, "There should be quite a few rabbits around here, so keep on your toes. We need to get about five, because the Simpsons need some, too, and none of them can hunt. Paul, I'm pretty sure I don't need to say this, but I want to make sure. Remember: before you shoot at anything, make sure what it is and make sure that none of us are in the area behind it."

"That went without saying, Dad."

"You're probably right, but it doesn't hurt to have a reminder."

They split up and walked alone across the field. Paul walked slowly, watching all around him. After about five minutes he heard his sister cry out, and Paul turned to see what was happening.

A rabbit had sprung up in front of her and taken off for the woods. Liz had been too taken by surprise to react in time, but Paul's father wasn't. He raised his gun and fired.

The rabbit spun into the air and landed with a soft thud two furrows away. Paul's father walked over to it and picked it up by the ears. From where he stood, Paul could see that the rabbit's head had been mutilated by the bullet. He felt sick, and looked away.

The rabbit disappeared inside the canvas bag slung over Liz's shoulder, and the three continued on as if nothing had happened. Except Paul. Much of the enthusiasm he had just five minutes be-

fore was gone. He kept seeing over and over in his mind what had happened to the rabbit when the bullet from his father's gun hit it. He began to hope that he would never have to shoot at one.

His father called softly out, "Stop! Quiet!"

They froze.

His father said, "Paul, there's a rabbit about forty furrows ahead of you. You can have it."

Paul looked blankly at him.

"Go on," he whispered at Paul. "Shoot it."

Slowly Paul flicked off the safety and raised the rifle to his shoulder. The rabbit was motionless, so he propped his elbow on his hip and the rifle he rested slightly on his fingers. The sights swung briefly around and then centered on the mound of fur up ahead, steadier than it ever was before.

"Shoot it!" Liz said forcefully, but keeping her voice low.

He started to squeeze the trigger, but then the silent film of the other one flying through the air, twisting, wrenching its life away, ran nonstop in front of Paul's eyes, and the sights blurred. Suddenly he lurched forward. "NO!" he cried, and pulled the trigger. The bullet landed ten feet short of the rabbit, showering it with dirt. The rabbit needed no more warning, and took off across the field.

"Weak bastard," he heard his father mutter, and a shot rang out.

The rabbit was dead like the first one, lying in another ditch, then dumped in the same bag.

Slowly Paul stood up, his head down. He was ashamed to look at his father, the murderer. He turned and started walking back the way he came.

His father and Liz said nothing. They just picked up their guns and continued walking.

Just before Paul entered the wood he turned around and looked at his father and sister across the field. About a hundred and twenty meters, he thought, and they're big targets. Heck, I hit the fake rabbit from that far.

Deliberately he drew a bullet from his pocket and put it in the chamber. Bolt closed, safety off, he raised the rifle to his cheek and aimed, ignoring the tear starting down his cheek.

"Bang," he said softly. "Bang."

TOM MCDOUGAL, *tenth*
Evanston Township High School
George Seidenbecker, teacher

The Corner Kingdom

I had never really noticed the tree before, but for some reason that crisp Saturday afternoon it caught my attention. It was huge and old, and stood on a neglected corner lot surrounded by crackling dried leaves and thriving weeds and abandoned aluminum cans. Its massive trunk was a gray-green color, and deeply furrowed and wrinkled like the face of a wizened old man. Far up a single icicle hung, melting slowly, its steady drops forming a damp spot in the leaves before me, and here and there on the trunk smaller branches sprouted like the gnarled fingers of a fairy-tale witch.

On one side of the tree a fort had been built out of fallen branches, leaving enough space for a small boy. I guessed that it would not afford much protection, however, as there seemed to be more windows than walls. From the branches of the fort, my eyes traveled to where, about eight feet up, the trunk of the tree separated into three parts. As I walked round and round the tree, I became more and more determined to climb up to the fork. It seemed, however, that the harder I tried, the less progress I made. There were no low branches to aid me, and the bark, when I tried to grab hold of it, only came off in my hands. Moreover, each time I fell down I was attacked by a resentful stalk of burrs, seemingly placed as a guardian of the tree.

I was becoming very frustrated when, just like in all the fairy tales I had read, a Prince Charming (of a sort) arrived to offer assistance. Admittedly, he was not the most dashing young man that I had ever encountered (most next-door-neighbors aren't), but he *was* taller than me, and, at the moment, somewhat obliging.

"I want to climb the tree," I told him.

"You what?"

"It's for an English assignment," I explained apologetically. "I have to get close to nature."

"Whatever you say," he said, shrugging his shoulders.

After this short exchange, my next-door-neighbor valiantly trampled the burr-bush, presented his hand, and gave me a knightly boost into the tree. Having attained my goal, I thanked him politely (rescuing damsels in distress isn't very profitable these days), and he continued on his way.

Alone once again, I settled back to study my surroundings in more detail. Now that I was in the tree, I could see dozens of rusted nails hammered at different places in the trunk — evidence that there had once been a treehouse of some kind among the branches. Far above birds twittered, not seeming to mind the chill

in the air, and, pulling my hat more tightly over my ears, I craned my neck to see.

The limbs of the tree, so rugged and sturdy where I sat, faded into a delicate nothingness up above. The intricate design they formed seemed like a maze for the tiny birds to flit through, and the uppermost twigs seemed to stretch toward the clear blue sky. A few remaining leaves clung, shriveled and tired, to the branches overhead. Shivering each time the wind blew, they reminded me of the searching, questioning hands of a beggar on a cold winter's night.

Occasionally, an airplane would pass by, or a car's horn would sound, and my attention would be drawn away. People passed by periodically, some walking dogs, others on errands. If they noticed me at all, it was to start in surprise, then nod in acceptance and continue with faint smiles on their lips.

A young boy, grasping a letter tightly in his hand, ran industriously toward a nearby mailbox, his thin jacket flapping about him, while to my left a man walked back and forth on the roof of his house, probably making some necessary repair. A golden dog nosed around in the weeds and soon disappeared, to be followed by a prancing black and white cat who streaked through a hole in a fence at a sudden noise.

Rubbing my numb feet and cramped legs, I looked around myself once more. The majestic old tree in the weed-filled lot reminded me of an aged monarch, forgotten by his subjects, neglected, and yet proud of what he had once been. I knew now that the tree, surrounded by the unchecked expansion of a new age, was a special gift of nature. It had survived so much already, and, like all things that are truly great, would always manage, somehow, to endure the ravages of time.

JEANNE OMOHUNDRO, *eleventh*
Evanston Township High School
Robert Roth, teacher

The Pugnacious Pussycat

This kid Bruno Damschroder always seemed to have the drop on me. Bigger, tougher, and louder than kids his own age, he was always ready to lean on a guy, or in this case, a girl. He'd give you a quick little shove from behind, dump your books, grab your hat, then dare you to start something. So I kept my profile low, hoping that Bruno never got me cornered.

I was thinking about this very thing while I was delivering my papers on the last day of school in June, the beginning of my summer vacation after a very dull year of sixth grade math and history and other boring classes. My last delivery was the Biddle place. Two kids lived there, meaner than Bruno but small enough as not to worry about, and they were backed up by this big scroungy dog who was as grouchy as a scorpion with a hotfoot, as my mother would say.

I tossed the paper on the porch lightly, so's not to stir up the dog, but just as I was turning away, the front door crashed open, and out flew a gaggle of angry shouts along with a large cat. I don't know whether he was thrown out or what, but by the time he hit the steps he was streaking tail up and ears back.

He shot by me like an F-4 Phantom jet, a rippling blur of gray. The Biddle's door slammed shut as I backed away, looking around for that high-speed cat. He was waiting for me at the corner, sitting on a low stone wall, tongue-washing himself in a very nonchalant fashion as if nothing had happened.

Man, he was gross. Both ears atop his wide flat face were cauliflowered and chewed up; deep, healed scar tissue over his right eye had pushed his eyebrow down until it almost covered his eye, giving him a permanent cockeyed squint. His coat was either dirty gray with white spots or dirty white with gray spots — I couldn't decide which.

From my pocket I dug out a piece of soft candy still wrapped in paper and shoved it towards him. He sniffed it, then ate the whole thing, paper and all. "Let's go, Harry," I said. The name just popped into my head, I suppose because of my uncle, who plays professional hockey, whose name is Harry also.

I hung up my delivery bag in the garage, waiting for Harry. He soon strolled in, gave my legs an official rub-around. I went inside, leaving Harry sitting patiently by the door. "Mom," I called out casually, "a big cat followed me home."

"Never mind about the size," she replied. "I hate cats and we're not interested in such an animal."

"But he's hungry, Mom. Harry ate a piece of candy, paper and all."

"What about Harry?" asked Pop, coming in on the tail of the conversation.

"He eats candy," said Mom, giggling. "Paper and all."

"Yeah," I said. "He's sitting on the hood of our car right now, washing his feet."

"My brother Harry?"

"No — Harry the cat. Come and take a look at him." In the garage Harry eyed Pop, flicked his tail and gave him a leg rub. "An ugly brute," commented Pop. "Where'd you get him?"

I told him. When Pop rubbed Harry under the chin, the cat hissed, like a viper. "Hey," said Pop. "He can't meow. You've got yourself a handicapped beast here."

"I know," I said, as Harry curled up his front paws into furry fists and jabbed at Pop with his left. "Something else, too. After he ate the candy, he belched a lot. I never heard a cat do that, never. You think there's something wrong with him?"

Pop grinned. "No, but of his nine lives, I'd say it's about six down and three to go. You can keep him, if he'll stay, but he belongs in the garage. Your mother has her opinion of cats, so don't expect any improvement when she sees this one. And you feed him."

Harry stayed. By August he weighed 17 pounds. We got used to his hissing, which he couldn't help, and his belching, which he seemed to enjoy, but Mom avoided him. "He looks punchy," she said, "and mean. He'd better never hiss at me."

I was the only kid in town with a pet like Harry. I tied a piece of old throw rug over the rear carrier of my bike and Harry would ride along, hanging on with his claws and hissing at passing cars. Sometimes my friends would gather around Harry, hissing at him. Harry would stand up on his hind legs, double up his front paws and jab away like George Foreman. I loved Harry.

Then along came Labor Day. Just thinking about school made me feel bilious, like Harry — and it also reminded me of Bruno. Its being the first day of school, Mom insisted that I dress up, which I hated. School was dismissed early since it was the first day, so we were let out at 2:30.

I'm jogging along, anxious to get out of my school clothes, when I hear this clomp clomping behind me. I didn't have to look. I knew who it was — Bruno, looking bigger and meaner than last June. He was closing fast.

"Don't we look pretty," he hooted. "Your shoes are on backwards, kid. You're gonna trip and hurt yourself, dummy." Slick as a whistle, he kicked my right foot sideways in mid-stride, spilling me flat on my face in the dirt, knocking off my glasses. Angry and scared, I looked up at Bruno's grinning face. "Told you," he leered. "Warned you, but--------"

I didn't see Harry, but I heard him hiss. Next thing I knew he was up on Bruno's back and shoulders, clawing way at his head ratatat-tat, triple time. When Bruno turned his head to see what was after him, Harry leaned over and let go a combination belch, hiss, and scream right in Bruno's ear. I could see the blood drain from Bruno's face and he ran, old Harry hanging on, still using his head for a bongo drum. I called out and Harry came back, hissing softly.

Mom, who hates cats, was so proud of Harry she said, "Come on. Let's ask the vet why he can't meow. It's the least we can do for him."

I held Harry in the car and when we got out, he was awfully jumpy. I put him on the examining table and held him down, just as the vet walked in. He took one look at the cat and yelled, "Hey, where'd you find him?"

"Find who?" My heart sank, because I knew he recognized Harry.

"Rocky, my old crazy cat. He hung around for a couple of years but he got so mean I had to put him in a cage. He wasn't cockeyed then, but one way I'd know him. He couldn't meow, so he hissed. Hey there, old Rocky. Want to hiss for me?"

Old Harry sat crouched on the table, his ears twitching, eyes flashing, no doubt thinking about his time in the cages out back. Then he straightened up, flicked his crooked tail, opened his mouth and meowed. Just once, no more.

The vet scratched his head. "I'll be darned. Boy, he sure looks like Rocky. Why'd you bring him out?"

"Never mind," I said, picking him up. "Let's go, Mom."

Harry never meowed again, but that once was enough. You'll never find a cat smarter than old Harry.

LAURIE WHITE, *eleventh*
Maine Township South High School, Park Ridge
Mike Deines, teacher

Teaching the Illiterate

It was becoming very clear to me that my younger sister was completely baffled by the scholastic fundamentals of writing, such as the proper way of putting a sentence together. She was capable of finding an idea, but was incapable of writing more than four lines on the subject. She was continually mystified when her teacher kept telling her that four sentences wasn't enough.

At this time, I had been writing for nearly five years, so when she came pleading for help, I couldn't turn her down by pretending not to know the English language. I sat her down on the couch in the study, and immediately her pencil hit her blank piece of paper, and she waited for me to start dictating.

"First of all," I said, lighting a cigarette, "you can very easily write a definition of a subject, take love for instance, but that isn't enough. In order to form a good story, you have to consider the elements of a story."

"Like what? Capital letters?" she asked.

"Consider the plot, the characters, the theme . . ."

"Well, just skip all that."

"You'll need characters," I said.

"I already got a character," she explained impatiently, "her name is Erma. She's in love."

"I'm sure she is. But who is she in love with? You have neglected to bring a second party into your story."

"She's in love with this guy who's five years younger than she is. And he's really ugly, and he has this peg leg, but that doesn't matter because he has money."

I stopped for a moment to try and figure out what she had told me, then rationalized that I would have to bring all of this down to the basics.

"Okay, your subject is Erma, although I don't know where you got that name, and she is in love with a peg leg. But your peg leg must have a name."

"Oh, I got a name for him . . ."

"And this peg leg must have a life of his own. So you have Erma and you have peg leg, but they must be two separate individuals." I looked at her, and she crossed her eyes. "Then, you find that you need something else. Your plot, your theme, your antagonists . . ."

"My what?"

"Antagonists. The things that get in the way of the . . . well, we'll get to all that later."

"But when can she kiss Herman?"

"Who the hell is Herman?"

"Herman is the peg leg."

"Herman and Erma? Sounds like a dog show. She can kiss Herman any time she wants, provided she has a reason for doing it."

"The reason is, 'cause she's in love with him," my sister explained, growing very impatient with my ignorance.

"But why is she in love with him?"

"Because he has money and a yacht, and what is an antagonist like?"

"Okay, say he has money. Where did he get the money, and why does it attract Erma? You should take your major factors and go deeper into them. Perhaps Erma was poor and never had money, or love, so when she meets Herman and finds he's wealthy, she can satisfy her desire . . . although anyone who can fall in love with a peg leg must be suffering from something very . . ."

"All right," she said, "so she falls in love with Herman because she never had money or love."

"But why didn't she have money or love?"

"Because her parents died before she was born."

"Look, maybe Erma — you have to change that name — maybe Erma's parents really didn't want her. That way, if she wanted love, she would spend her life searching for it, and then meet Herman in her search-"

"And that's where Herman comes in?"

"He could, although you will have to explain how they met and why they attract each other. Perhaps Herman — get rid of that name too — perhaps Herman finds something in Erma that he's been searching for too, so when they . . ."

"Do you think she should marry him? You know, kiss and fall in love and get married and live in the suburbs?"

"Will you stop jumping ahead of me? Now look, if you're going to have them meet-"

"What's all this antagonist crap anyway?"

I was getting mad. Listen! Say Erma's mother never let her date any boys, or perhaps her father never gave her any money. Now, seeing how Erma wanted these things, and her parents refused them, her parents are the antagonists because they keep it from her, and Erma is the protagonist because she wants it."

"So I should put down that they never let her date boys?"

"No. I mean, you could, but I was just using that as an example."

"Yeah, but that was just what I was planning to put down. So okay, so far we have Erma who wasn't loved, and her parents, very angonistcalic like would give her money or love, so she up and left and went to the city where she meets Herman in a gay bar . . ."

"Oh, God!" I screamed. "Look, it's all very well that she might meet Herman in a bar, but a gay bar? I don't think Erma would go near a . . ."

"Okay, okay, so they meet on a bus in New York. So now they're in love with each other, and they have babies, so they go home . . ."

"Where is home?"

"Oh, anywhere will do. It really isn't important. Ah, all right; they went to Herman's yacht . . ."

"Wait a minute, I want to know how they fell in love. What you have are two people on a bus, and the same two people on a yacht madly in love with each other, when for all we know they never even looked at each other."

"But if they didn't look at each other, how would they fall in love?"

"They have to speak with each other," I groaned.

"Okay, Herman comes up and says that she looks like his pet antelope, Deloris, and . . ."

"How about saying she looked like someone he once knew?"

"Same difference. Okay, he says that she looks like a friend he once had who had this pet antelope named Deloris . . ."

"Will you forget the damned antelopes? Now, taking it for granted that they fell in love with a minimum amount of class, then they can go to his yacht, but there should be a reason for them going there."

"So the yacht is the antagonist?"

"NO!" I screamed, hiding my face.

"How about marriage for the protraganists, and the peg leg as the antagonist?"

"Look, we'll get to those later. What you need now is your plot, even though we're still biting our way through Erma and Herman. Your plot is the basic story itself. After you have established your plot, you add your characters, with care, and finally the protagonists and antagonists. With these two individual forces against each other, you create a conflict."

"A who?"

"I don't know why I'm trying to explain this to you."

"I think it's adorable. So now we got Herman, who is in love with Erma, and the epileptic that really loves Herman and keeps beating up Erma in parking lots . . ."

"What epileptic?"

"Then who should the antagonistic be?"

"Your antagonist doesn't have to be a person, it can be an object, or an illness-"

"How about an antelope named Deloris?"

"What is this thing you have about antelopes? Just forget them for a minute. Perhaps Herman has an illness that keeps him from marrying . . ."

"No, that stinks. I already have enough to go on." She patted me on the cheek and went dancing out of the room.

She came home with her story a few days later, and threw it at me with vicious force. I looked down at her story, and my mouth dropped.

It ran:

There was once a lady named Erma who didn't have love or money but had two parents who had it and wouldn't give it to her, and wouldn't let her date guys either. One day, she left and went to a bus in the city where she fell in love with peg leg Herman after he said she was prettier than an antelope in a sewer. They went to his yacht where they found love and joy and Erma had a baby eleven months later. They met many antagonists along the way such as the buzz saw that cut off Herman's peg leg after a dance at the Y.M.C.A., and Erma found out she wasn't the mother of her baby. One day, they were eaten by a family of hungry ponies, and across their graves was the word, LOVE.

PHIL MCGRATH, *twelfth*
DeKalb High School
Mary Penson, teacher

Singing in the Rain

Timmie Davis. A strange name for a girl but then Timmie was a strange girl. She was more than strange. She was weird. She's one of those girls — or maybe the only girl — who thinks life is an MGM musical.

Anyhow, I was standing outside in the miserable rain waiting for my bus, when this girl with bright red galoshes came splashing up to me with a big grin.

"I'm singing in the rain
just singing in the rain
what a glorious feeling
I'm happy again."

She stood in front of me barely reaching my shoulder.

"Hi — Hi. I'm Timmie Davis."

I was stunned — don't get me wrong — I can make it with a girl just as good as the next guy, but a girl who sings and who wears bright red galoshes! She didn't seem to notice anything wrong and went on.

"Do you think it'll stop raining? I hope not. I just love rainy days don't you? Though I suppose you're one of those guys who melts in the rain." When I stared at her as though she were exactly nuts, she said gaily, "I know your type — a jock." I managed to get an incoherent sound out before she continued, "Not that I don't like jocks — it's just that they are extremely dull — all they want is sex. I think that there should be more to a relationship than sex. Don't you?"

At that point I managed to explode, "Who the hell are you!"

"Timmie Davis. Who'd you say you were?"

"I didn't."

Just then the bus pulled up and in relief I jumped on and scrunched up in the backseat. But did this weird girl get my message and leave me alone? Don't be silly. She plopped down next to me.

"Are you going to —"

By that time I was totally confused. "Going to what?"

"Tell me who you are."

"No."

"O.K. Where are you going?" she asked pertly. Humility certainly was not one of her better traits.

"Nowhere."

"Oh really? That's interesting. Most people are going somewhere whether it's up or down or even sidewa—"

"I was being sarcastic," I broke in. She glanced at me demurely, her dimple flashing.

"So was I."

I moaned and lit up a cigarette.

"O.K. I get your hint," and then she burst into a song.

"Gray skies are gonna clear up
put on a happy face.
brush off the clouds and cheer up
put on a happy face."

I was mortified, "Look here, Timmie. Will you please shut-up?"

"Why? I like to sing. It's better than smoking. I bet you can't guess which musical that was from."

I sighed, stubbing out my cigarette, "BYE BYE, BIRDIE."

She squealed, causing the man in front of us to give us a dirty look.

"How did you know! It must be a sign."

"I had the lead in it last year."

She grabbed my hand in disbelief, "Really?"

"Really." I looked down at our hands.

She took her hand away quickly, "I don't even know you."

"What?"

"You just took my hand. What kind of girl do you think I am!"

"I didn't take your hand. You took mine."

"Oh. I—"

"I know. You're different and you sing in the rain. So let's go . . . sing in the rain!"

"No."

"What?"

"I don't feel like it." She stared gloomily out the window. "I just decided that I don't like rainy days after all."

I stared, not believing what I just heard, and to top it off, the bus came to a sudden stop and I lurched forward into the seat in front of me, bumping my head loudly. She began to giggle, "You look funny." I, by then, was fed up with this girl and decided to tell her what she could do with it.

"How did I ever get mixed up with you? Why don't you leave me alone — go bother some other guy!"

"I can't. I'm a sucker for blue eyes."

I gaped at her, "I have brown."

"Brown what?"

"Brown eyes!"

She leaned towards me, peering into my eyes. "My God, you do!" She jumped up, "Hey bus driver — let me off. This guy has brown eyes."

I sat stunned, watching her llollop off the bus with her red galoshes flopping, singing down the street at the top of her lungs.

"I'm singing in the rain
just singing in the rain
what a glorious feeling
I'm happy again. . . ."

I lit up another cigarette as the bus went on its way — Definitely a weird girl.

KATHY MURRAY, *twelfth*
DeKalb High School
Mary Penson, teacher

HONORABLE MENTION

Prose

CARBONDALE

*"Invisibility" by Henry Chen (Mary Sasse)

DE KALB

*"Commercial Intoxication" by Bob Spangler (Mary Penson)
"Poor Frank" by Phil McGrath (Mary Penson)

EVANSTON

*"Lateness: The Time-Honored Institution" by Elizabeth Newman (Malcolm E. Stern)
*"Leftists Condemn Social Righteousness" by Robert Phillips Campbell (Malcolm E. Stern)
*"'Network' on TV: We're Mad as Hell" by Sharon Neyhus (Malcolm E. Stern)
"Drrrriiiiivvvvvinnnnnnng" by Lisa Taylor (Carol Lounsbury)
"A Bird's Eye-View" by Della Daugherty (Norman Carlson)
"The Bus" by Malissa Kullberg (Curtis Crotty)
"Dinner Time" by Allison Plyer (Carol Lounsbury)
"Bus" by Aliyson Hunter (Norman Carlson)
"Shades of Love" by Rhonda Swaby (George Seidenbecker)

GLEN ELLYN: GLENBARD SOUTH

"The Tale of the Woodchopper's Donkey" by Steven Langkamp (Gerry Craig)

GLENVIEW: GLENBROOK SOUTH

"What Hath Man Wrought" by Jay Geistlinger (Thomas Valentin)

HIGHLAND PARK: NORTHWOOD JUNIOR HIGH

*"Target: Little Brothers" by Mike Unger (Myndell Betensky)
"The Free-Throw Contest" by Dan Boorstein (Joyce Hazelkorn)
"My Life, My Death" by Patty Guttry (Joyce Hazelkorn)
"My Companions Are the Stars" by Darin Adler (Joyce Hazelkorn)

HOFFMAN ESTATES: J. B. CONANT HIGH

"Alone" by Debbie Adamczyk (Lee Mulcrone)

---

* Runner-up for publication.

LAGRANGE: LYONS TOWNSHIP HIGH
"The Speeder" by Craig Stephan (Holly Haberle)
"Numbness Has Set In" by Jeff Hooper (David Briggs)
"Modern Heroes: Fighting in the Gray" by David Lyon (Mr. Notier)

LAKE FOREST
"Dinosaurs" by Peter Zagoras (Alva Lowey)

O'FALLON
"Notyello" by Glenn Peterson (Ruth Smith)

PARK RIDGE: MAINE SOUTH
"The Pits" by Mary Filkins (Mike Deines)

ROCKFORD: GUILFORD
"Interminable Existence" by Mike Vitale (Joan Potvliet)
"Decoyed" by Brad Munson (Joan Potvliet)
"Most Dangerous Game" by Cindy Hole (Cari Kelley)
"Billy" by Doug Peterson (James Applegate)
"Maybe It's Not Too Late" by Kurt Watkins (James Applegate)
"A Christmas Once Remembered" by Renai Hodges (James Applegate)

SKOKIE: NILES NORTH
*"Jessica" by Cindi Hartman (Peter LaForge)
"Mother and I" by Nancy Benjamin (Peter LaForge)
"Window" by Steven Alpert (Peter LaForge)
"The Destination of Species" by Steven Weissburg (Peter LaForge)

WILMETTE: REGINA DOMINICAN HIGH SCHOOL
"Analysis of Portia's 'Quality of Mercy' Speech" by Colleen Hennessy (Sr. Grace Mahoney)

WINNEBAGO
"Music of a Sunrise" by Jodi Neumann (Karen Niemeier)

---

* Runner-up for publication.

Preface to Poetry Selections

The committee was impressed with the 374 poems that we received. We considered all ages, but we chose the best poems we could find. We felt our younger winners were fine poets in their own right. Thank you all for letting us read your poems.

English Department
Illinois State University

Judging Committee: Janice Neuleib, Chairperson
Lucia Getsi
Victoria Harris
Robert Sutherland

To No One in Particular
(Remembering Several Lonely Summers, 19—)

Love wasn't tied to time or place.
It gently grew as days went by
But memory has dimmed your face.

A shivering touch, a warm embrace—
I thought that thrill would never die.
Love wasn't tied to time or place.

Your hand left mine; my gaze met space.
My first emotion was a lie
And memory has dimmed your face.

Those tingling moments left no trace;
My passions always quickly fly.
(Love wasn't tied to time or place?)

With smiles, each summer I retrace.
One love will last; why should I cry,
Though memory has dimmed your face?

Long years do not my need replace.
Now fond remembrance brings a sigh:
Love wasn't tied to time or place
But memory has dimmed your face.

WENDY ZUCKERMAN, *twelfth*
Evanston Township High School
Malcolm E. Stern, teacher

Blind Pigs

Pink is a celluloid color
plastic and unreal
"fliffy fluffy" clouds
are pink
sickeningly sweet frosting
a facade of brightly smiling faces
strained, forced
naive as a toy piano
plink plink pink
dumbness trying to act cute
or the perfect pink eyed children playing
printed happy grins
xeroxed a trillion times
and pasted
carefully, neatly
on the walls of hell.
Pink is monosodium glutamate
BHT, ascorbic acid, artificial flavoring
a postcard from Auschwitz
(greetings!)
imagined realities, real imagery.
Our love is
a sodium acid pyrophosphate shade of pink
for I do not love you
and I refuse to be pink
anymore.
I will seek
someone who is
blue.

SUSAN PHILLIPS, *twelfth*
Niles Township High School North, Skokie
Peter LaForge, teacher

It Was in a Nursing Home

Well, mostly I didn't know what to do.
Her tongue was hanging out
and her eyes
seemed almost separate
from the rest of her body.
They were cheering and screaming and I think
maybe crying,
and she was telling me
in a sort of garbled way,
how good it was to see me,
how good it was to see me,
just how good it was to see me.
She grabbed my hand and kissed it,
held it close to her mouth,
and called me sister.
How good it was to see me.
And now her eyes laughed
and I just couldn't look away.
So I asked her first name and she said
how good it was to see me.
So we smiled at one another
and our eyes did an intimate dance,
and I looked away.
I left then and she said
how good it was to see me.
So I smiled again but closed my eyes.

MICHELE DOUGHERTY, *twelfth*
Evanston Township High School
Sydney Lieberman, teacher

Grandpa

You seasoned life
with ketchup on eggs,
chocolate-covered raisins,
and a frosty mug of beer.
At night, dentures removed,
"Mr. Prune Man" emerged
amid screams of delight,
your paunch, the cradle
for my pajamaed exuberance.

Death clawed at these souvenirs.
Stripped you to a boozer
in a South Side saloon —

A twisted line on a final page.

CAROLE CLARK, *eleventh*
Arlington High School
Steve Athanases, teacher

French-Fried Sigh

Revealing our lives and desires was done delicately
Through metaphors in food;
You told me you had fasted for two days
And laughed when you remembered you
Broke it with MacDonalds.
"I wasn't really hungry," you said.
We both expressed our love for vegetables, and for
Shishkabobbing corn and peas on forks;
I confided my infatuation for playing
With jello.
I sought your gastronomic affection with cookies,
And you caused a storm in my stomach
Whenever I saw you.
Food.
Emotions hidden behind a mask of gluttony.
Your favorite breakfast is yogurt,
Granola, and honey.
I asked nervously if you ever got sick of it.
Never.
It's funny, but I'm never hungry when you're
Around, but at other times
I want to eat something and
Settle for anything.
I saw you today, me on my way to cookies and sweets,
And you on your way to "real" food.
The cookies were stale, my darling,
My hotdog.

RUTH LEVY, *twelfth*
Evanston Township High School
Malcolm E. Stern, teacher

Nobody Liked Semour Borey

at eisenhower grade school in
miss keller's third grade room all
the time mikey fenton and jay core
scribbled ugly
pictures of borey wearing his
mended blue
pants with that faded brown striped
shirt so what if his pants were above
his ankles he couldn't help
it if that was his favorite
outfit for two years in a
row once karl modranski made up
a song which went semour borey is
a horey he sang it round and round the
playground at recess 'til mrs. kunkel
sent him straight to principal
poley's office i always wondered why
he got in so much trouble for
that stupid tune everyday sally
dean and those stupid yucky girls
giggled when semour would trip past
their little circle all they did was
giggle those dumb girls semour always
ate by himself sometimes he just had
to cry i never teased borey and i
think he kind of liked me semour borey
never came to fourth grade nobody
missed him either

LAURA KNAPP, *twelfth*
Morton West High School, Berwyn
Patricia Geiser, teacher

Once Upon a Time

Once upon a time,
when I would rather carve a pumpkin
than bake it into a pie,
and I went out knocking on doors
instead of answering them;
before cross-my-heart
became a bra,
and stick-a-needle-in-your-eye
didn't risk infection;
when Barbie dolls
meant more than boyfriends,
and the mailman brought birthday cards
instead of university information;
We played Cootie Kissers
rather than cribbage,
and worried about multiplication tests,
not ACT's.

But Santa Claus turned into a J C Penney salesman
and tea parties changed to beer bashes

And a rainbow is the reflection of moisture
conveyed by the sun.

BETSY SPETHMANN, *eleventh*
Arlington High School
Steve Athanases, teacher

Summertime Friends

We're summertime friends.
In days of little league games
and lemonade
we laugh,
smiling at the sun
and the boys,
knowing each other nearly as well
as we know ourselves.

Come autumn, the changing
of the leaves and of our minds,
we each know the other too well.
Your impatience with my over-sensitivity,
my frustration with your impatience,
we're drawn apart,
drifting farther from each other
as we drift from the sun.

When snow is present
and the winter world stagnant,
intolerance breeds in the cold.
Our meetings are infrequent and harsh,
no forced smiles.
Conversations are comparative accounts
of our different and separate lives.

Gradually spring overcomes us.
We are aware, yet not in control,
a force is pulling.
Our two minds start to reach,
first for each other — communicating
wordlessly once again —
then outward yet together as one.
Understanding, like the new leaves
and flowers responding to the sun,
grows, as we respond to each other.

SHAILA ZELLMAN, *twelfth*
Evanston Township High School
Naomi B. Brodkey, teacher

(Untitled)

i feel
Like burnt toast . . .
unwanted;
square — and
Black.
cast away
For the birds
my soul has been pecked
To small crumbs
lost
In the slashing,
Whip-like grass
if only . . .
my black surface
Could be scraped away
And smothered
With love and acceptance
like that
Of the charred bread,
spread
With melted butter
if only . . .
people would see
That beneath the black exterior
the bread
Is just the same

JANICE BUTLER, *eleventh*
Elgin High School
Robert Foster, teacher

In Memory of William Carlos Williams

Near a black
stump

in a burned down
forest

sits a white
rabbit

in a pile of
ashes

nervously nibbling

on the last green
plant.

DARRYL MALEIKE, *twelfth*
Carbondale Community High School
Mary Sasse, teacher

Metamorphosis

Alone
I juggle words.
They slice the air like knives
and glitter like icicles,
obeying my every command.

With you I am shy
and they become fat fish,
wriggling out of my grasp
and dropping on the floor.

With a word
you turn them into kittens,
and they tumble, one after another,
in every direction.

DEBORAH GORDON, *eleventh*
Evanston Township High School
Norman Carlson, teacher

Noah's Formal

The Penguin is certainly handsome
I saw one at the Senior Prom.
His colors black and white were true,
Looking so debonair as they always do.

His date that night, a pure, white swan
A feathered evening dress she had on.
Her face and lips and nails were painted.
I wondered how they got acquainted.

The couple arrived with two raccoons,
A dog, a cat and two baboons.
An elephant, his date a loon.
They had only met that afternoon.

The strangest prom that I've been to,
Quite similar to a formal zoo.
The Dean, his face grew tight and paler.
I wish'd that I'd met their tailor.

ROBERT LEAHY, *twelfth*
Glenbrook South High School, Glenview
Sandra Dumalski, teacher

(Untitled)

Riding the waves,
Perfect little circles
Swimming
In a white ocean:
Cheerios,
Floating in a bowl of milk.

BETH MCMANUS, *eighth*
Northwood Junior High School,
Highland Park
Myndell Betensky, teacher

(Untitled)

A sweep of plum shadow
Over the lids of
Bleary eyes
And vaseline shine
Smeared on
A grim expression —
The paints
Of self assurance
Clog the pores
And cake in wrinkles.

TAMMY SIEGALL, *twelfth*
Glenbrook South High School, Glenview
Mary Osborn, teacher

Birds in the Snow

It snowed last night.
Untouched, the smooth powdery snow
Dazzles all who view its silver glitter.
The sparkle reflects in the eyes of children;
They plunge awkwardly like small exotic birds
In their flashy caps and mittens.

Evening shadows cross the snow,
Blue and grey.
Crystal clear, the icicles hang from the trees,
Shiny prisms.
A small slate-colored sparrow pecks a spare seed
From the soft tiny footprint of a now sleeping child.

BETH SMITH, *tenth*
Carbondale Community High School
Mary Sasse, teacher

Dark Man

They used to ride ponies
through the sky,

Have tea with elephants,
Play baseball with bengals,
Converse with caterpillars,
Throughout the day.

Then nightfall — they'd sleep and wake
And begin another joyful day,
With escapes —
Sometimes.

But now they're suspended in reality,
Forever.
These children.

Since the day the
Dark man
Came and took their
Ponies
Away.

STEPHEN GLICKMAN, *eleventh*
Niles Township High School East, Skokie
Verniel Lundquist, teacher

A Song for Wild Rice

I sing a song for wild rice,
For grass untouched by blades.
I sing a song for green shoots long,
And trees that give me shade.

I sing a song to flying birds
And frogs that leap in ponds.
I sing for saplings in the wind
That wave like magic wands.

I sing my song for fresh clean air,
No longer dingy grey.
I sing, I sing for moonless nights
Lit by the stars of May.

So happy to be home again,
To sleep in my own bed.
So happy to be home again,
Why had I ever fled?

ERWIN COHEN, *eleventh*
Niles Township High School North, Skokie
Peter LaForge, teacher

Advice

He came to me last night
with unspeakable sorrow in those
child's blue eyes,
that rowdy little hellion
I have chased and cursed
with fists clenched to hurt
and teeth biting off harsh words
of anger
while he laughed, mere inches from my
enraged grasp,
and he stood by my bedside docile.
My little brother is in love.
One of his thin tan hands
tugged nervously at my bedclothes,
willynilly,
the other played distractedly
with a lock of his wayward hair;
those hands roving randomly,
was it just yesterday
they were still
cunning to pinch and pull fiendishly,
to poke and pry among my possessions?
Last night he asked me,
all grave and innocent,
what to do,
his young face all anxious
as he admitted,
standing there,
yearnings of manhood.
I told him
to go tease the schnauzer
or mess up his room
or watch some dumb show on TV
or turn up his wretched disco records
because
he could see I was trying to sleep.

MARGOT FITZGERALD, *twelfth*
Lake Forest High School
Alva Lowey, teacher

Haiku

Snow, silent as dew,
as intricate as love is,
and as hard to grasp.

MICHELLE MATHEWS, *tenth*
Lyons Township High School, LaGrange
Yvonne Vish, teacher

Grandma

A Santa Claus in the summer
Who always used table cloths and
Had full cookie jars,
And who celebrated birthdays with
Train sets that take two hours to assemble,
Who lost cafe curtains to brown
Linoleum tile, chrome and fruit baskets,
And celebrated Christmas —
Complete with hair nets and pudding —
On December 23.

LISA ARNOLD, *twelfth*
Glenbrook South High School, Glenview
Mary Osborn, teacher

HONORABLE MENTION

Poetry

ELGIN: ELGIN HIGH SCHOOL
"Forgotten Aura" by Kary Young (Carol Morrison)

EVANSTON: EVANSTON TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL
"Guarded by Gargoyles: Uptown, Chicago" by Michele Dougherty (Sydney Lieberman)
"Disco Roller Queen" by Ruth Levy (Malcolm E. Stern)

GLEN ELLYN: GLENBARD SOUTH
"Daydream for Winter" by Randy Swearingen (Gerry Craig)

GLENVIEW: GLENBROOK SOUTH
"Housewife's Thought" by Tommy Siegall (David Mullaly)

LAKE FOREST: LAKE FOREST HIGH SCHOOL
"Footprints" by Michael Caruso (Alva Lowey)

SKOKIE: NILES TOWNSHIP NORTH
"Restaurant" by Susan Phillips (Peter LaForge)

HONOR ROLL OF TEACHERS

Steve Athanases
Myndell Betensky
Naomi Brodkey
Norman Carlson
Mike Deines
Sandra Dumalski
Robert Foster
Patricia Geiser
Joyce Hazelkorn
Peter LaForge
Sydney Lieberman
Alva Lowey
Verniel Lundquist
Mary Osborn
Mary Penson
Robert Roth
Mary Sasse
George Seidenbecker
Malcolm Stern
Susan Street
Yvonne Vish